



Montana

Department of Labor and Industry

Commissioner's Office

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August 31, 2006

## 2006 LABOR DAY REPORT

HELENA, Mont - - Montana Department of Labor and Industry Commissioner Keith Kelly today presented the 2006 Labor Day Report, to Lt. Governor John Bohlinger on behalf of Governor Brian Schweitzer, key members of the Schweitzer administration, the State Workforce Investment Board and the citizens of Montana.

According to Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly, Montana's labor economy has performed at a higher rate than the U.S. over the last five years in almost all key areas.

"Today we pay tribute to the leadership, strength and freedom of Montana's greatest resource - our diverse workforce," said Kelly. "Montana continues to experience record low unemployment, spurring individual economic and average annual wage growth. As a result, Montana moved from 41<sup>st</sup> in per capita personal income to 39<sup>th</sup>."

Additional information relating to employment projections, economic diversity by county, Indian reservation economies, and wage distributions were presented by Montana Department of Labor and Industry economists Dr. Brad Eldredge and Tyler Turner.

Highlights from their presentation included:

- Occupations projected to grow at the fastest rates tend to require educational training beyond high school.

*(more)*

- County economies in Western and Southern Montana grew more diverse while the remainder of the state lost economic diversity over the last five years.
- Indian reservations in Montana exhibited lower average annual wages and dissimilar employment patterns relative to the state as a whole.
- The average wage paid to Montana workers who held only one job in 2005 was 27% higher than the total average wage paid to workers who held more than one job.

“Foreign demand has driven record high commodity prices for Montana’s natural resources, spurring employment growth,” said Governor Brian Schweitzer. “Building upon Montana’s inherent industry strengths (mining, healthcare and construction) we have the ability to continue to experience positive gains.”

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Copies of the Labor Day Report 2006 are accessible at [www.ourfactsyourfuture.org](http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org), or by calling the Research and Analysis Bureau toll free at 1-800-541-3904.